

MERRIMACK MAGAZINE AND LADIES' LITERARY CABINET.

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Vol. I.]

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[No. 35.]

Communications.

"Either the products of your closet-labors bring,
Enrich our columns, and instruct mankind."

FOR THE MERRIMACK MAGAZINE.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

I HAD promised myself, some few weeks past, the indulgence of occasionally scribbling for your LADIES' CABINET, but want of health and some other reasons have prevented the execution of what I then had in view. To amuse and render one's self agreeable to your fair readers, would be a very pleasant thing, and flatter the vanity of the most stoical of our sex.—If after reading this, or any thing else I may send you, any one of them should inquire, in terms of approbation, *UNDE DERIVATUR?* it is ten to one, but my vanity may induce me by some *very modest means* to make it known, who the fortunate happy creature is. But, should the question be asked, in terms of a different or contrary import, it is impossible for me to divine what may be the effect.

Had I less aversion to pedantry, perhaps Mr. Randolph's Latin might have passed unnoticed; but I never could excuse a man of classic, liberal education, for making use of scraps of foreign languages, merely to display his learning, when addressing himself to an audience, a great majority of whom, have no knowledge of any but their vernacular language, and by which, at some times, they can with difficulty make themselves understood. Far be it from me, however, to intimate that the Legislature of the Union are deficient in common understanding.

We often charge the ladies with affectation: in many instances the charges are just; but are we not as frequently and justly chargeable with it? There is, perhaps, no species of affectation to which men have stronger propensities, than that of learning. One reason for it may be, because it is not so easily detected as many others. There are, comparatively, so few who are capable of discriminating between its reality and a fallacious appearance, that a man with but a smattering, can pass himself off great numbers for much more than his in-

trinsic value. But that degree of address which is absolutely essential, successfully, and for a long time, to play such a game, seldom falls to the lot of these glossy gentlemen. And when one is openly detected in such a design, it is difficult for him to pass for his real value. S.X.

FOR THE MERRIMACK MAGAZINE.

Sentimental Gleaner... No. 3.

"I have stray'd
Wild as the mountain bee, and cull'd a sweet
From every flower that beautified my way."

THE Benevolent Man, with a fortune which enables him to indulge his philanthropic wishes, is indefatigable in the pursuit of distressed objects; and considering himself responsible to the Deity, for the property he has bestowed upon him, he believes it his duty to lessen the wants of the afflicted. His many public and private acts of charity, renders him conspicuously beloved. Uniform in his disposition to do good, he visits the humble dwelling of poverty, and privately affords his assistance; while numbers are relieved by his beneficence, who know not from whence the bounty flows. Did all the sons of prosperity imbibe similar sentiments, how much would misfortunes be alleviated.

The Miser—what a sordid wretch! Full of anxiety, he pursues his speculations; he eats the bread of carefulness; he smothers every spark of benevolence; his character is shaded by inhumanity; and his name becomes odious, even to his friends.—There are mysteries in Providence, which human wisdom cannot reveal; and we frequently see one brother loaded with a redundancy of fortune's gifts, devoid of a soul to relieve another, equally deserving, who experiences the most distressing wants.

FEAR guides more to their duty than gratitude: for one man who is virtuous from the love of virtue, from the obligation which he thinks he lies under to the giver of all, there are ten thousand who are good only from their apprehensions of punishment.

HISTORY is the accuser, and distant generations will be the judges, at whose tribunal the actions of public characters will receive their decisive sentence. A single error in the life of a great man, has frequently destroyed the monument of his fame. A uniform attention to justice, is the only foundation that can render him secure. Happy they who pass through life, enjoying the blessings of society, without being exposed to the dangerous eminence of popularity. Few are capable of sustaining an elevated situation, with approbation. Such is human nature, that, if suddenly raised to honour, it is prone to assume, unmindful of the capricious disposition of fortune, who takes delight in persecuting her greatest favourites; they fancy themselves far removed from the reach of envy, and look down upon their fellow-citizens with disdain and contempt. May we not thus address these characters? "Measure your shadows, and you will find no addition to them by your present honors."

How are the literary talents of some writers prostituted in the encouragement of the most atrocious crimes!—Neither sublimity of composition, an energetic and affecting style, nor the false appearance of argument, can ever compensate for the injury that vague minds receive from those publications where SUICIDE is represented as heroism; nor can the writer of the Sorrows of Werter ever make atonement for the injury he has done to society.—Must not the indignation of every virtuous mind fall upon him?—In the heart of man, vice shoots spontaneous; we need not inhale poisonous sentiments, to encourage its rapid growth. The foil is luxuriant; to suppress and prune the rising sprouts, has required the utmost vigilance of the moralist in every age and country.

THERE are certain scenes, which must be felt to be realized; among these is the pleasure of embracing the object of our fondest wishes, after a painful separation, and those only who experience a pure affection, who exist but in the felicity of each other, can realize the rapturous moment. True love is not an illusion of the mind; it is a passion which, by brightening the prospect of human life, increaseth the happiness of its votaries. K. A.

FOR THE MERRIMACK MAGAZINE.

SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS.

THAT the value of an object may generally be estimated by the advantages resulting from it, will, it is presumed, be readily admitted: The great importance of a general diffusion of learning in a community is obvious; but the methods pursued to promote this dissemination are various, particularly as they relate to the encouragement held out to the young pupil, many of which have proved deficient.

The importance of a good education, is not so obvious to children in general, as to make them very assiduous in the attainment; there should be a stimulus, both to the instructor and the scholar, beside the pecuniary reward to the one, and the prospect of future benefit resulting from learning to the other.

It has been found by experience, that the ambition, both of the scholar and master, are equally excited by examinations at stated periods, by suitable persons; this has seldom failed to stimulate the scholars to study with diligence, and to exert themselves to excel each other in learning, while the instructor, who knows that his school will be critically examined, becomes solicitous that his pupils should appear to advantage in the eyes of the visitors, and has the additional incitement—the pleasure which arises from being seconded by their diligence and application.

Were these examinations to become more general, emulation would not rest wholly with the instructor and scholar; parents who have no particular regard for learning, themselves, (having got along very well in the world without it) would likewise, be ambitious to have their children make as good an appearance as those of their neighbours, and induce them to exact a more punctual attendance.

Newburyport has experienced, in an eminent degree, the advantages flowing from this rational mode of creating emulation; and it is sincerely wished, that the gentlemen who compose our School Committee* for the ensuing year, will have the satisfaction to find that the instructors and pupils vie with each other in meritizing their unqualified approbation. TYRO.

* The School Committee of this town for the ensuing year consists of the following gentlemen, (among which are the selectmen,) with the addition of the Rev. Clergy.

Mr. Zebedee Cook, § Edward Little, Esq.
Col. John Peabody, § Daniel A. White, Esq.
Mr. David Griffis, jun. § Joseph Davis, Esq.
Mr. Samuel Foster, jun. § William Water, Esq.
Capt. Robert Foster, § Dr. Nath'l Bradstreet,
Capt. William Combs, § Capt. Thomas M. Clark,
Samuel A. Otis, Esq. § Mr. Joshua Carter,
Capt. Thomas Cary, § Capt. Gilman White.
Capt. John Pearson, §

Miscellaneous Selections.

"Various, that the mind—studious of change
"And pleas'd with novelty, may be indulg'd."

From the Literary Magazine.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

I HAVE now in my hands an old copy of Milton, which at first belonged to my father. It is an old book, and few volumes have been oftener in my hands. I would not exchange it for an edition of the same work embellished by all the arts of the printer, the engraver, and the binder.— Inanimate objects have an influence on the affections; else why do I prefer this homely volume, shatter'd by the hand of time and of use, to Paradise Lost newly printed and decorated? Milton is only inferior to the voice of inspiration—He is first among the poets who are not the prophets of the Lord. His erudition was vast, but his genius was vaster. His learning did not restrain, but regulated his flight. Amidst the glories of heaven he looked undazzled, and rays from his penetrating mind illuminated the depths of despair. Did not their antiquity increase the veneration bestowed on the names of Homer and Virgil, criticism would always place them below Milton on the scale of poetical merit. I have read, I have studied the Iliad and the Æneid—I have read and examined with critical scrutiny, in the original language or in the translation most of the poems which bear the name of epic or heroic, and the more I read the more I am convinced, the longer I live the more I am convinced that a greater magnitude of mind is discovered in the Paradise Lost, than in any other uninspired poem in existence. Paradise Lost is the greatest effort of its author. His other works rank as follows in the scale of merit:

2. Comus.—3. Paradise Regained.—
4. Samson Agonistes.—5. Lycidas.—6. L'Allegro and Il Pensero.—7. Hymn on the Nativity.

I consider the relish for the poetry of Milton as a criterion of the taste and mental elevation of the reader. I could fill a volume in speaking of Milton, so keen is my sensibility to his excellencies, so great is the instruction and pleasure which I have received from him. I have marked many of his passages in my almost worn-out copy, and offered upon them some remarks: To these I sometimes recur with satisfaction; they are mementos of former periods which have been passed in converse with the mighty bard, and of some hours of dejection which were lightened by his voice.

Dr. Johnson has said, that we must read Milton's Paradise Lost as a task. This is one among the many premature sentences

pronounced by that great man. The whole of his work we could not expect to excite the same pleasure; but if the greater part produces not delight, then there is no delight in elevated poetry.—I consider Dr. Johnson's criticisms however, on this performance, with some exceptions, to be in the highest degree excellent. Addison's Saturdays' Papers on the same subject, though not equally acute, are eminently pleasing. Cowper has said in one of his most agreeable letters, that Milton has employed the only machinery which was justifiable in a Christian poet.

The exordium and invocation of Paradise Lost, are eminently happy. They embrace compleatly the subject which is to be sung; they are simple and strong. How poor is the invocation of any muse to Milton's invocation of the Spirit! His strain was heavenly, and to heaven he looks for aid. As the fall of angels was the fall of man, Milton first discloses to our view the apostate spirits in their regions of sorrow, forming new schemes of rebellion and malice.

Many of the most striking passages of Milton have been noticed by the critic, and suggested to the imagination of the reader. I have however the hope of pointing out some portions of Milton which are deserving of the highest commendation, and on which criticism has not yet been lavish of its praises.

I am deceived if, from all the volumes of uninspired poetry, there can be produced a sublimer description than that which is contained in the following lines of the VIth Book of Paradise Lost.

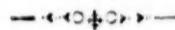
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven;
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
Of goats, or timorous flocks together throng'd
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
With terrors and with urs to the bounds
And Chrysal wall of heaven, which opening wide
Roll'd inward and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep; the monstrous fight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind: Headlong themselves they
threw
Down from the verge of heaven; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard the infernal noise, hell saw
Heaven ruined from heaven, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
Nine days they fell: confounded chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in the fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Encumber'd him with ruin: Hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole & on them clos'd.

I cannot conceive how it is possible for words or conception to exceed the preceding passage in strength. It repre-

a termination of a battle purely original. Here Milton could not tread either in the footsteps of the Grecian or the Roman bard. The scene of the action was on the borders of heaven, and the place in which the routed army was plunged, was the bottomless abyss—chaos, the empire of universal confusion, was by the rout, encumbered with ruin. The soul which conceived this uncommonly original description, must have been agitated by the tumults of poetical rage; and the hand which wrote it must have trembled. Though all the lines are admirable, yet I have ventured to mark in italics, those which I thought were supereminent among the eminent.

To be continued.



SETTLEMENT IN MARRIAGE.

An advantageous settlement in marriage is the universal prize, for which parents, of all classes, enter their daughters upon the lists; and partiality or self-complacency affords to every competitor the most flattering prospect of success. To this one point tends the principal part of female instruction; for the promotion of this design, their best years for improvement are sacrificed to the attainment of attractive qualities, showy superficial accomplishments, polished manners, and, in one word, the whole science of pleasing, which is cultivated with unceasing assiduity, as of most essential importance.

The end is laudable, and deserving of every effort that can be exerted to secure it; a happy marriage may be estimated among the highest felicities of human life; but it may be doubted, whether the means used to accomplish it are adapted to the purpose, as a first impression is by no means sufficient to determine the preference of a wise man. It is not then sufficient that a girl be qualified to excite admiration; her own happiness, and that of the man to whom she devotes the remainder of her days, depend upon her possession of those virtues, which alone can preserve lasting esteem and confidence.

The offices of a wife are very different from those of the mere pageant of a ball-room; and as their nature is more exalted, the talents they require are of a more noble kind: something far beyond the elegant trifles is wanted in a companion for life. A young woman is ill-adapted to enter into the most solemn of social contracts, who is not prepared, by her education, to become the participator of her husband's cares, the confidante of his sorrows, his stimulator to every praise worthy undertaking, the partner in the labours and vicissitudes of life, the faithful and economical manager of his affairs, the judicious superintendent of his family, the wife and affectionate mother of his children, the preserver of

his honour, his chief counsellor, and, to sum up all, the chosen friend of his bosom. If a modern female education be not calculated to produce these effects, as few surely will judge it to be, who reflect upon its tendency, it is incompetent to that very purpose, which is confessedly its main object, and must therefore be deemed imperfect, and require reformation.

It may also be doubted whether the present system be better suited to qualify women for sustaining the other characters which they may be destined to fulfil. Those of widowhood and a single life are the lot of many, and to support them with dignity requires peculiar force of mind. Adversity often places both sexes in situations wholly unexpected; against such transitions, the voice of wisdom admonishes each to be prepared by early acquaintance with those principles which fortify and enable it to sustain the unavoidable strokes of fortune with firmness, and to exert the most prudent means to obviate their consequences; but the bias given to the female mind by the present system encourages the keenest sensibility on the most trifling occasions, its chief design being to polish, rather than to strengthen.

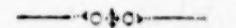
A well governed temper, is, of all qualities, the most useful to conduct us steadily through the vexatious circumstances, which attack, with undistinguishing violence, the prosperous and the unfortunate; and is eminently necessary to women, whose peculiar office it is to lessen the inconveniences of domestic life; though, as a moral obligation, equally incumbent upon men. A well governed temper is the support of social enjoyment, and the bond of conjugal affection: deficient in this, a mother is unqualified for conducting the education of her children, and a mistress unfit to govern her servants. This self-command differs widely from that apathy which is the effect of constitution: in order to infuse respect and love, we must possess an equality, which can only result from reflection and habitual culture. Such a subjection of the angry passions to reason and duty accommodates itself to circumstances, and the disposition of others with whom we are connected; it gives superiority in every contest, and is of inestimable value to the possessor on every trial.



COMMERCE WITH BOOKS.

If a rational man reads an excellent author with just application, he shall find himself extremely improved, and perhaps insensibly led to imitate that author's perfections, although in a little time he should not remember one word in the book, nor even the subject it handled; for books give the same turn to our thoughts and way of thinking, that good or ill company does to

our behaviour and conversation, without either loading our memories, or making us even sensible of the change; and particularly I have observed in preaching, that no man succeeds better than those who trust entirely to the stock or fund of their reason, advanced indeed, but not overlaid by commerce with books.



A FRAGMENT.

From Interesting Memoirs.

THIS is a stranger, whispered Hospitality.—What injury hath he done you? demanded Justice.—He knows not that he has offended, said Conscience.—He would not have treated you unkindly, sighed that Charity which suffereth long and is patient.—There was no resisting this plea: My blood took a 'moral flow', and covered my cheeks with blushes; I summoned every perverse particle that had soured the milk of human kindness in my breast, and exercised them with such fury, as, I trust, will forever prevent these diabolians from returning.

Literary Notice.

Mr. E. Sargeant, of Newyork, has just put to press White's 'Life of Adm. Nelson,' which will shortly be published in a handsome octavo volume. Such has been the avidity of the British public, to read this interesting work, that two editions have already been consumed; it is the last Mr. S. intends to reprint. The Biography of this great naval hero must command attention; and we have no doubt, the American publisher will be amply remunerated.

Editors' Notices.

We are happy in again hearing from our respected correspondent, S. X. We regret the primary cause of a suspension of his lucubrations, ill-health, which has prevented him from indulging an inclination which must have proved a source of pleasure to our readers, and a gratification to us. To S.X. and many others, were we permitted to do it, we would say, redeem the time which is past.

K. A. will accept our acknowledgments for a repetition of favours—of the merits of whose literary labours our readers will decide for themselves. We this day present their Sentimental Gleaner, No. 3. Prompt attention will be paid to future numbers.

The attempt of TYRO is inserted with peculiar pleasure. A continuance of his correspondence is requested.

"Tis pleasant to remark
How early genius flumes her for the flight
And tries her short excursions, fearful yet
And little on her wing confiding, now
Full fledg'd and dauntless, cutting through the clouds
And fearing in the eye of heaven itself."

Poetry.

GOOD-HUMOUR.

OF pride and mad ambition we complain,
Destructive war and pestilence, in vain;
Ill-temper's hateful influence o'er the mind,
More pain creates, than all those ill combin'd;
Bids social love in every bosom cease,
And clouds the beauteous beams of smiling peace;
Baffs all the joys that bloom to sweeten life,
Embitters happiness, and lengthens strife.
To calm the troubled heart, to soften woe,
To stop the tear misfortune taught to flow,
He, who surveys our grief with pitying eyes,
Sent down the nymph, Good-humour, from the skies;
Her beauteous presence beams perpetual day;
The loves and graces in her presence play;
The opening flowers bloom sweeter where she treads;
The faded blossoms lift anew their heads;
The lovely seraph waves her purple wing,
Diffusing all the balmy sweets of spring,
Beflows fresh beauties on the blooming vale,
And pours fresh fragrance on the spicy gale.

Observe the mansion where Good-humour dwells,
What heart felt joy each blissful bosom swells!
The cheerful, happy father, smiles to see
His playful offspring prattle round his knee;
While the fond partner of his heart bestows
That joy which only from Good-humour flows!

THE TEAR.

— There is a tear,
Which, streaming for an object lov'd and lost,
With mournful magic tortures and delights—
Relieves us—while its sweet suppression loads;
And, by augmenting, blunts the sting of woe.

MY CHOICE.

FAR rather would I in some humble cell,
Distant from all that's gay, forever dwell,
Than waste my fleeting hours, and thus divide
My time 'twixt folly, calumny, and pride;
Still trifling thus debase the gift of sense,
And live the slave of dull impertinence.

ADVENTURES OF BERTHOLDE.

From the French.

OF all the virtues, those of frankness and sincerity have been in every age least recompensed in a court. This, Bertholde experienced; for the king, shocked at the little regard he expressed for his person, told him, that if he was unwilling to be turned out in an ignominious manner, he must leave the palace immediately. He obeyed; but as he was going, said, with an air of gaiety, that he was of the nature of flies, "which the more you attempt to drive away, the more obstinately are they bent on returning. I permit you to return like them," cried the monarch; provided you bring them along with you; but if you appear without them, you shall forfeit your head.—"Agreed," replied the peasant, "to do this, I will only take a step to our village;" the king gave his consent and Bertholde hasted away.

The monarch did not doubt of his keeping his word, but had a great curiosity to see in what manner he would perform it, and the clown

soon satisfied him; for he had no sooner reached the village than running to a stable belonging to one of his brothers, he took out an old ass, whose back had lost the friendly covering of a sound skin, and mounting on his back, turned again to Verona, accompanied by an infinite number of flies riding behind him, and in this equipage arrived at the palace; when commanding the fidelity with which they had stuck to his beast, and attended him all the way, he told the king that he kept his promise; Alboin, pleased with the stratagem, soon conceived such an idea of his abilities, that he imagined he might be useful to him, in helping him to disentangle the intricacies of government, and therefore gave him free leave to stay at court.

I shall omit the various contests between Bertholde and the king, on the virtues and vices of the ladies, in which the king did justice to their merit, while our hero endeavored to bring them into contempt. But I cannot avoid taking notice of a petition of the ladies of the court, to obtain a share in the government, and administration of affairs.

The king having read their long request, which the queen had engaged the chancellor to deliver to him, replied that this affair being of very great importance, required his serious consideration; that he would weigh the matter, and give the ladies an answer in an audience, to which they should be admitted the next day.

Bertholde, the enemy of beauty, could not hear the petition and reply, without bursting into a loud laugh. The king asked the reason: Bertholde ridiculed his complaisance, and the easiness of his temper, when the king replied that he was in a terrible embarrassment; that he should be ruined if he granted the request, and that his danger would not be less if he refused it. A refusal, said he, will enrage them; they are able to revenge themselves, by making their husbands, who have the command of my troops, rise up against me. My dear Bertholde, added he, my faithful friend, help me out of this labyrinth; thy imagination, fertile in stratagems, has hitherto drawn thee out of the dangers thou hast fallen into at my court, and I am perfused thou canst draw me out of this. Bertholde professed every thing, and desired the king to be satisfied. Having stood musing for a moment, he left the palace, went to the market and bought a little bird: He shut it up in a box in the presence of the king, gave it to him, and desired him to send it to the queen, for her to give to the ladies who had presented her the petition, with a most express prohibition against opening the box, on pain of incurring his highest indignation; but to keep it till the next day when it should be opened before him, at the audience he had promised to grant them.

The officer to whom the box was given, discharged his commission, and the queen also gave the box to the ladies, who were still with that princess, talking together on the answer the chancellor had brought from the king. As we easily believe what flatters our self-love, there was not one present who did not think, that their request was already granted. His majesty, is sensible of the justice of our demand, and he is equity itself, he immediately found that it was impossible for him to refuse us; to heighten the favours which he will certainly grant us, he has only tho't fit to defer it till to-morrow. There is now no doubt, continued they, but that this box contains something extremely valuable, and the confidence with which he has deposited it in our hands, shews also, that he does not think us unworthy of the honour. Come, ladies, let him see that we deserve it, by an exact and faithful observance of the prohibition relating to this precious treasure.

At this they took leave of the queen, and after having agreed to assemble the next day at the

governor's lady's, in order to go to the audience in a body, each returned home.

They were hardly got home, when every one was filled with an impatient desire to know what it could be that was contained in that box; and this impatience increased to such a degree, that they could not sleep all night. Never was any hour watched for with more impatience, than that appointed for their assembling at the governor's lady's, and they were all there three quarters of an hour before the time appointed. They all began to discourse on the box they had received the evening before, which the governor had taken from his wife as soon as she came home; and fearing lest her well known curiosity should bring him into disgrace, had taken the precaution to lock it up in his cabinet. However, as the time of audience approached, it was brought out and given to the assembly.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Married,

In this town, Mr. GILMAN FROTHINGHAM, to Mrs. JOANNA HORTON.

In Falmouth, Mr. HEZEKIAH WINSLOW, to Miss NANCY JONES.

Died,

In Philadelphia, ELIHU PALMER, ag. 42; the well known lecturer on *moralis, politics, &c.*

In Portland, Capt. FRANCIS HART, ag. 38.

In Wells, SAMUEL BARTLET, Esq. ag. 55.

In Portsmouth, Mrs. ABIGAIL SALTER, aged 50.—Capt. JOHN MENDUM.

In Boxford, Rev. ELIZUR HOLYOKE, ag. 75.

In this town, Mrs. RUTH BARTLET, wife of Capt. Samuel B. aged 26.

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